



Taking part in the Everhart Village groundbreaking ceremony are (left to right): Ken Dickson, Volunteer Construction Coordinator; Charles Withuhn, CHAT Board Member & Tiny Homes Project Coordinator; Gary Lee, Construction Manager; Leslie Johnson, CHAT Board President; and Bob Trausch, CHAT Board Vice President & Operations & Facilities Manager.

CHAT CELEBRATES GROUNDBREAKING FOR EVERHART VILLAGE

Wednesday, July 13, 2022 was one of the most significant days in the eight-year history of Chico Housing Action Team.

On that date, ground was broken at the site of Everhart Village in Chico, a new shelter site with 20 sleeping cabins for unhoused people who suffer from mental illness. This ceremony marked the culmination of several years of planning for an innovative program believed to be the first of its kind in California (and perhaps beyond).

Approximately 40 people showed up for the ceremony, held under the shade of oak trees on the site.

CHAT Executive Director Nicole Drummond welcomed everyone to the gathering, stating “Everhart Village is a perfect example of what can happen when an entire community comes together.”

Scott Kennelly, Director of Butte County Behavioral Health, noted the village will give residents access to many services within a short walk. The site is adja-

cent to Behavioral Health Offices, a residential treatment house, Butte County in-patient behavioral health, Butte County Adult Services, a pharmacy, the DMV, and the Ampla Health clinic. There is a bus line nearby.

Behavioral Health received state funds for the Resiliency Empowerment Support Team (REST) project, which will provide an intensive outreach and engagement team. The team will go out into the community to connect with individuals experiencing homelessness who would benefit from living at Everhart Village and receiving treatment there. The public can also make referrals to the program.

County case workers will provide counseling to the residents. CHAT case managers will provide guests with enrichment classes to learn skills such as budgeting, interviewing, and writing resumes. CHAT recently hired Caitlyn Patterson to be the village’s program manager.

County Supervisor Debra Lucero shared a tribute to Dan Everhart, for whom the village is named. Dan was an

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EVERHART GROUNDBREAKING

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activist and champion for marginalized and homeless people. He died in 2018.

Megan Geddis of the Chico Chamber of Commerce praised CHAT “for the amazing impact the organization has had on our community.”

Shannon McGovern of California Water Service said her company thinks so highly of CHAT and the Everhart Village concept that it has donated \$200,000 to build the site’s water infrastructure.

CHAT’s hope is that Everhart Village will be completed and ready to welcome its first residents sometime this fall (2022). Just before residents move in, CHAT supporters and the general public will be invited to attend a grand opening and get a first-hand look at the completed village.



Caitlyn Patterson, CHAT’s Everhart Village Program Manager.

CHAT HIRES PROGRAM MANAGER FOR EVERHART VILLAGE

Now that ground has been broken for Everhart Village, CHAT is pleased to announce that Caitlyn Patterson has been hired as the Everhart Village Program Manager.

Caitlyn comes to CHAT with experience in crisis intervention and crisis management to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Originally from Arcata, she has worked locally at the Torres Community Shelter, Passages, and Home & Heart.

Looking forward to her work planning and carrying out Everhart Village services, Caitlyn says, “As our housing crisis continues to intensify, my heart and soul led me back to the housing world through CHAT. I am so grateful and feel incredibly honored to be joining the CHAT team.”

Caitlyn earned both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Social Work at California State University, Chico.



Butte County Supervisor Debra Lucero, standing next to a photo of the late Dan Everhart, read a tribute to him at the Everhart Village groundbreaking.



Shown is part of the Everhart Village site, just after the ground breaking ceremony.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO EVERHART VILLAGE

It has taken hundreds of donations from individuals, organizations, and businesses to get Everhart Village started. Here is a beginning list of major business and organizational contributors, as well as a list of sleeping cabin sponsors. **No doubt there will be more—we will do our best to publicly acknowledge everyone. We are beyond grateful to everyone who has contributed to making CHAT’s dream come true!**

Everhart Village Business & Organization Contributors

BCM Construction; Belmont School (Mass.); California Water Service; Cerro Wire; Chico Natural Foods; Consolidated Construction; CSU, Chico Tiny House Club; George Santos Excavating, Inc.; Johns Manville Insulation; L&W Supply; Pat Conroy Construction; Pro Frame Construction; Robert Bell Construction; Robert Erickson Civil Engineering; Rotary Club of Chico; Square Deal Mattress Factory; Tarman Architectural Group

Everhart Village Sleeping Cabin Sponsors

Anonymous; Michael Arens (in memory of Vicki Arens); Carol Burr & Roger Lederer; Debra Cannon & Lulu’s; Chico Area Interfaith Council; Chico Friends Meeting / Quakers (2); Doin’ It Justice Choir; Gisela Eckart Family Trust (in memory of Gisela Eckart); Patricia & Victor Estrada; Faith Lutheran Church; Lorraine Forster; Eileen Hodson & Steve Kennedy; Robin Keehn & Charles Yarbrough; Linda Luck (in memory of Klaus Luck); Homer Lundberg; Guthrie Smith, Soroptimist International of Chico & Sister Chapter Soroptimist International of Nara, Japan (2); Brooks Thorlaksson & Steve Watson (in honor of Bill Such); Trinity United Methodist Church; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Chico; Tom Van Overbeek & Kimra Hawley; Kathy Weeks; George Wing; Nancy Wirtz; Robert Zadra

CHAT HOSTS EVERHART COMMUNITY FORUMS

On July 14, 2022, the day after the Everhart Village ground breaking, CHAT hosted the second in a series of community forums to share information and answer questions about the project. The first forum took place several months ago. Due to considerations for Covid safety, the forums have been held via Zoom.

CHAT believes it is important to inform project neighbors and the community at large about how the village will be run, and the roles of both CHAT and Butte County Behavioral Health (BCBH). For this forum, CHAT representatives were joined on a panel by three BCBH employees, including BCBH Director Scott Kennelly. The panel presented information and answered questions from the public.

Among the subjects: history of the project; physical description of the site; how referrals will be made; BCBH’s outreach team and the REST (Resiliency Empowerment Support Team) project; community building activities; residence compliance to expectations of behavior and programs; and security.

More forums will be scheduled. For information, follow CHAT on our Facebook page, Website (<https://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/>), Instagram, or Twitter. To be added to our email list to receive forum information and other CHAT updates, go to <https://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/sign-up-for-emails>. CHAT will provide Zoom links to all forums.

Message from Nicole

**By Nicole Drummond,
CHAT Executive Director**

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to support the amazing work at Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT) since January 2022. CHAT is dedicated to finding solutions to support the most vulnerable in our community. The determination and dedication I witness and experience daily from the individuals connected to CHAT is inspiring.

CHAT is actively exploring multiple projects to expand the availability and options for housing individuals with various needs. We are engaged with a multitude of agencies which support our residents by pooling expertise and resources to provide the best opportunity for individuals to remain successfully housed. This newsletter contains updates about our programs and details of various projects which we are very excited to share with all of you.

Everhart Village is the perfect example of community collaboration. The groundbreaking of this project on July 13 was such a huge milestone for CHAT and our community (see article elsewhere in this newsletter). This program is only possible because of the collaboration with Butte County Behavioral Health and others. Specifically, the County's creation of the Resiliency Empowerment Support Team (REST) Program will provide referrals and services to the villagers. This innovative project will not only be a huge benefit locally but will also serve as a model for other communities.

CHAT is applying for state funding to purchase two residences that have the potential to house 12 individuals. We are connecting with other funding in the community to purchase homes to move towards permanency and sustainability for our residents and the organization. CHAT's dedication to sustainability on multiple levels is something we are very proud of and is integral to all our work. Sustainability for our residents, our housing, our organization, our employees, our environment, and our community is a priority.

CHAT is also facilitating options in the community for residents who are interested in and ready for more independent housing. CHAT is a forever home for many, though some residents reach a point where they want and are able to secure housing independently. Supporting individuals to reach their full potential is one of CHAT's main priorities.

It has been an honor to help support the expansion of staff to increase our capacity and operations. This organizational structure will more readily allow our volunteers, which are the heart of our organization, the ability to contribute within their strengths and interests. When we all contribute and work together amazing things can happen. To all of you taking the time to read this I want to personally thank you for your interest in CHAT. Please visit our website, chicohousingactionteam.net, if you would like to find out more about how to support CHAT

TO VETS, FROM VETS -- \$600,000 GIFT TO CHAT!

As this newsletter was going to press, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and individual donors gave CHAT a \$600,000 donation toward purchase of two houses / apartment buildings to house homeless veterans.

It all started when VFW leader Larry Wahl approached CHAT with his concerns about the large number of veterans living on the streets. CHAT already houses veterans in two locations, but there are many more in need. Larry wanted to help and said he would get a group together to work on raising funds. Within a few weeks, CHAT received the incredibly generous \$600,000 gift!

More good news – we quickly found and purchased one property. We will be providing more details about the donation in our fall newsletter, including the properties we purchase and how many vets we were able to house. In the meantime, thank you Larry and the VFW!

FAMILY GRATEFUL FOR TRIP & CHAT

It was the trip of a lifetime. Thanks to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, CHAT residents James and his three children enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to Florida earlier this year. They saw a rocket launch at Cape Canaveral, went to museums and other NASA exhibits, enjoyed every ride at Universal Studios in Orlando, and spent a day at the beach.

“We’re so grateful,” says James, “I could never afford to take the family there.”

James made the request to Make-A-Wish on behalf of his youngest child, 6-year-old Adrian, who has struggled from birth with medical issues. Adopted as a newborn, Adrian underwent 12 hours of open-heart surgery seven days after his birth due to severe congenital heart defects. He will need follow-up surgeries when he’s older.

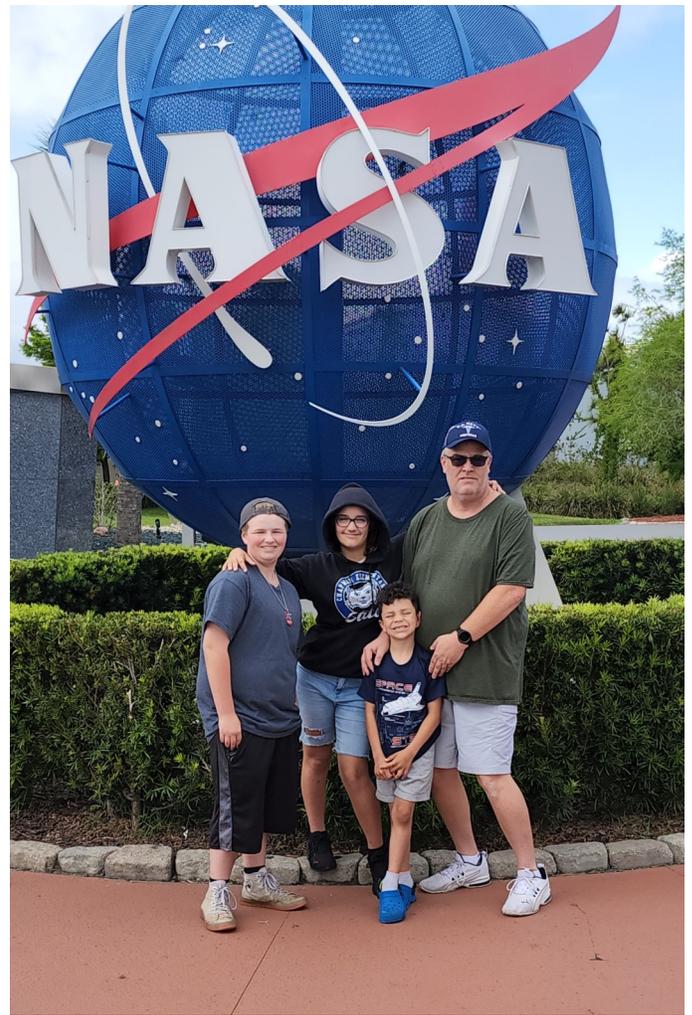
When asked his favorite part of the trip, Adrian doesn’t hesitate. “The rockets!” he exclaims.

James has a job working with developmentally disabled clients, but Adrian’s medical needs put a big strain on the family budget. MediCal and California Children’s Services cover many of the medical expenses, but not all of them. James is paid by the hour, so he isn’t paid for the time he misses when he has to take Adrian to Sacramento for medical care, once or twice a month.

“CHAT has really helped us by providing a home,” says James. Like other CHAT residents, he pays monthly rent, but at a below-market rate.

James has come a long way since family problems (including a separation from James’ ex-wife) landed the children and him in the Torres Community Shelter for 4 months in 2017. James knew it was temporary, but it still was tough. He was doing what he could to save money to get them a place to live, but rents are high and often first months’ rent and a deposit must be paid up front. He didn’t have that amount of money on hand.

A Torres Shelter case manager told James about CHAT. He was able to move into a CHAT apartment and provide a home for his children. But it wasn’t just a roof over their heads. CHAT volunteer Julian Zener is a retired cardiologist and has answered many of James’ questions. James also has gotten to know food director Kathy Weeks and volunteers Jim and Patrice Goubert,



James and his children (left to right) Riley, Madison, and Adrian, visited the NASA Space Center in Florida, thanks to the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

who deliver food to the family every other week. “I’ve met a lot of nice people through CHAT,” he says.

The children are doing well. Despite his medical condition, Adrian can run and play most of the time. Other times, he has seizures and trouble breathing. James estimates Adrian has been on the Enloe Hospital life flight helicopter to UC Davis Medical Center “maybe a dozen times.” Meanwhile, another child, Madison, just celebrated her 11th birthday. She is involved in the local Sea Cadets program, and James proudly points out a photo of her in her uniform. The program has provided many experiences, including riding in a Coast Guard airplane patrolling the San Francisco Bay Area. Riley, 14, who plays guitar and loves to draw, will be starting at Inspire High School for the Arts and Sciences this fall.

WE CAN DO IT BECAUSE OF YOU!

Donations have been the lifeblood of CHAT's ability to maintain our programs to house people who are unsheltered or at danger of becoming unsheltered.

We have a particular need now to complete funding of Everhart Village. Generous donations from individuals, businesses, service organizations, and faith communities already have the building process up and running. However, during the time necessary to properly plan and build our collaboration with Butte County, inflation set in, causing a sharp rise in the cost of building the site's infrastructure.

If you would like to help us get over the final financial hurdle, please donate and designate your gift for Everhart Village. Or, you may choose to make an undesignated gift and we'll put it to use in the areas of greatest need. Either way, you have our deepest gratitude!

To give online, go to CHAT's website at <https://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/> and click on the "Donate" button at the top of the page. You will be given the option of becoming a monthly donor or making a one-time donation. **To donate by check or money order**, please make it payable to "CHAT" and mail to us at Chico Housing Action Team, P.O. Box 4868, Chico, CA 95927.

We also appreciate donations of gently-used **furniture and household items**, when space is available in our warehouse. If you have something to donate, please take a photo of it and email it to us at info@chicohousingactionteam.net. We can accept **donations of vehicles**, running or not. You can donate your vehicle to CHAT by filling out the form at <https://careasy.org/nonprofit/chicohousingactionteam>.

CHAMP STAFF CONTINUE TO HOUSE CAMP FIRE SURVIVORS

This November, it will be four years since the Camp Fire ripped through Paradise and surrounding areas, destroying thousands of homes. Yet even now, many fire survivors have not found permanent housing they can afford.

This is where CHAT's CHAMP program comes in. Thanks to grant funding from the North Valley Community Foundation's Butte Strong Grant, CHAMP staff continue to assist Camp Fire survivors with obtaining affordable, permanent housing.

"The Three J's Team" – Jennifer Haffner (Program Administrator), Jessica Giannola (Case Manager), and Jess Hiller (Case Manager) – tirelessly work to find housing solutions for fire survivors. They work with CHAMP applicants to secure rental housing through landlord incentives and payment of participants' move-in costs. This includes a \$500 signing bonus for the landlord, a \$4,000 damage reimbursement fund, payment of rental application fees, first month's rent, security deposit, and some rental assistance. The program

also provides case management and mediation services when needed, for the first year of the tenancy.

CHAMP staff have assisted 116 households, but there is a waiting list of approximately 340. The need is great, but the success stories keep their spirits up.



New CHAMP Case Manager Jess Hiller.

NEW HIRES SUPPORT CHAT RESIDENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

CHAT is pleased to introduce several recently hired staff members.

After residents move into a home, we want to be sure they are surrounded by people who will assist them in meeting their goals. That's where our Housing Support Coordinators (case managers) come in. In recent months, we've welcomed Jessica Diaz (Wildflower House Support Coordinator), Jericka Roshell-Carson (Housing Support Coordinator), and Cassi White (Redwood Housing Case Manager). These folks will receive valuable support from our house volunteers, some of whom have worked with residents for several years.

We recently ran an article by Izzy Lashley about her work in our Wildflower House. Izzy has now moved into the new position of Housing Connections Supervisor. She will provide guidance and oversight to the program staff collectively known as Housing Connections.

CHAT now has a long-needed Office Manager, Amanda Starkey. Amanda has already made a positive difference in the CHAT office. A born organizer, she is working with Executive Director Nicole Drummond and other staff to find systems to make everyone's life easier.



***Jericka Roshell-Carson,
Housing Support Coordinator***



***Cassi White, Redwood Housing
Case Manager***



Izzy Lashley, Housing Connections Supervisor



Amanda Starkey, Office Manager

Keep up to date with all things CHAT! To receive email news updates from us, please send your address to info@chicohousingactionteam.net.

WITH GRATITUDE, FROM CHAT

Dozens of businesses, service clubs, and faith groups have contributed to CHAT since our founding in 2013. Starting with this issue of “Housing Action,” we will try to thank as many as we can.

Pancakes for CHAT – April 17, 2022

So many individuals and businesses donated their good or services towards this very successful fundraiser, either with food or silent auction items. With apologies to anyone we accidentally miss, we wish to thank and acknowledge:

Beatniks Coffee House, Broadway Heights, Chico Natural Foods, Chico Sports Club, Cotton Party, Diamond Steak House, Has Beans Coffee, Hula’s Chinese BBQ, Mo’s Smokehouse BBQ, Melody Records, Mim’s Bakery, New Leaf Chico, Preston’s Shoe Repair, Pullins Cyclery, Satava Art Glass, Smucker’s, Stobel Coffee, The Bookstore, The Printed Image, Tin Roof Bakery, Jed Speer, Larry Jansen, Alan Harthorn.

We encourage you to keep the businesses listed in mind when purchasing goods and services. We also thank the dozens of volunteers that day who helped set up, cooked, and kept the payment and food lines moving smoothly.

Food Program for CHAT Residents

Janet Brown, Camina Bakery, Chico Breakfast Lions (donation of commercial refrigerator), Chico Food Project (Blue Bags), Chico State Wildcat Food Pantry, Community Action Agency of Butte County / North State Food Bank, Contra Costa-Solano Food Bank, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Eric & Julie Nilsson, Salvation Army, Trader Joe’s.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Chico Housing Action Team’s mission is to ensure that everyone in our community has access to housing they truly can afford.

WHO WE ARE

Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, 530-399-3965, PO Box 4868, Chico CA, 95927, info@chicohousingactionteam.net

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/chicohousingactionteam/>

Website: www.chicohousingactionteam.net/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/chico_housing_action_team/

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ChicoHousAction>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd_dDVqD5w2mwrFjHZub3dQ

CHAT Staff & Core Volunteers

Administration Team

Nicole Drummond (Executive Director); Maryhelen Bill (Finance Manager); Caitlin Davis-Rivers (Grants Manager); Kris Evins (Property Manager); Amanda Gaylord (Placement Coordinator); Sarah Graham (Development Director); Leslie Johnson (Assistant Director); Theresa O’Connor (Communications Manager); Nancy Park (“Housing Action” Editor); Trixine Peart (Volunteer Coordinator); Sheldon Praiser (Treasurer/Finance); Amanda Starkey (Office Manager); Bob Trausch (Operations & Facilities Manager); Kathy Weeks (Food Program Coordinator);

Resident Support Team

Amber Benedict (Social Services Director); Sharice Atkins (HUSH Program Manager); Jessica Diaz (Wildflower Housing Support Coordinator); Bryan Hester (Housing Support Coordinator); Sawyer Lamontagne (Housing Support Coordinator); Izzy Lashley (Housing Support Supervisor); Jericka Roshell-Carson (Housing Support Coordinator); Angel Taylor (Lead Housing Support Coordinator); Cassi White (Redwood Housing Case Manager) Norma Wilcox (Harmony House / Mental Health).

Everhart Village Team

Doug Calbreath (Volunteer Electrician); Ken Dickson (Volunteer Construction Coordinator); Gary Lee (Construction Manager); Janice Lee (Volunteer Plan Designer); Caitlyn Patterson (Program Manager); Charles Withuhn (Tiny Homes Project Coordinator)

CHAMP Team

Jennifer Haffner (CHAMP Program Administrator); Jesica Gianola (Case Manager); Jess Hiller (Case Manager)

Maintenance Team

Tommy Boswell (Maintenance / Construction Lead); Juan Arredondo (Maintenance / Construction Worker); Arrow Jordan (Maintenance / Construction Worker); Patrick Webster (Maintenance / Construction Worker)

Contracted Videographers

Stacey Wear & Gerard Ungerman, AKA Respectful Revolution

CHAT Board of Directors

Ron Aker, Poney Green, Leslie Johnson (President), Joaquin Jordan, Nancy Park (Secretary), Sheldon Praiser (Treasurer), Bob Trausch (Vice President), Bob Van Fleet, Kathy Weeks, Charles Withuhn